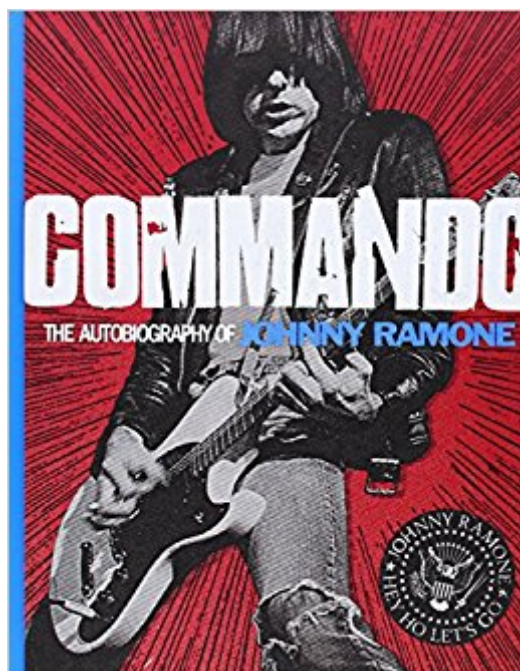


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# Commando: The Autobiography Of Johnny Ramone



## Synopsis

Raised in Queens, New York, Johnny Ramone founded one of the most influential rock bands of all time, but he never strayed from his blue-collar roots and attitude. He was truly imbued with the angry-young-man spirit that would characterize his persona both on and off stage. Through it all, Johnny kept the band focused and moving forward, ultimately securing their place in music history by inventing punk rock. The Ramones were inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2002—two years later, Johnny died of cancer, having outlived two other founding members. Revealing, inspiring, and told on his own terms, this highly designed memoir also features Johnny's assessment of the Ramones' albums; a number of eccentric Top Ten lists; rare historical artifacts; and scores of personal and professional photos, many of which have never before been published. **Praise for *Commando*:** "Amazing book . . . dense and throbbing with character enough to bring this departed New York icon barking back to life." **New York Daily News** "Johnny's delightful, sadly posthumous autobiography, *Commando*, is just like its author—as punk as it gets." **Wall Street Journal** "Ramone memoir reveals charming, grumpy punk icon." **Reuters** "There's no grand confessional to end *Commando*, just a nod of gratitude toward family, friends, and fans. Its characteristic succinctness rings genuine." **Austin Chronicle**

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

John Cummings (1948–2004), aka Johnny Ramone, was ranked by Rolling Stone as #16 on its list of the "100 Greatest Guitarists of All Time." In *Time*'s rating of the

“10 Greatest Electric-Guitar Players,” he was named, in a fit of appropriate rebellion, #11.

This is a good quick read about the Ramones and the motivating factors and idiosyncrasies behind Johnny and his band. Johnny is pretty blunt about his recollections the rock scene, of other bands and even his own band members and music. If this book would have come out while he was alive, I'm sure he wouldn't have made many people very happy, but I don't think he would have cared. Overall, the tone of the book offers a straight forward view of how Johnny looked at life, music and the Ramones. Most of the pictures in the book are from the early days (pre Marky) and while interesting they don't really fit the later topics towards the end of the book when talking about the end of the band. I don't think there is more than 1 or 2 pictures of either Marky or CJ in the book other than album covers. I was also surprised how little detail or thoughts were offered on the deaths of Joey and Dee Dee. Details were also scarce about the illness that ultimately ended Johnny's life. But even with these shortcomings, I found myself enjoying the book. The biggest criticism of the book is its construction. I purchased the "hardback" book and found that it seems to be nothing more than the paperback version of the book with 2 pieces of cardboard glued to the front and back cover. These cardboard pieces have nice illustrations on the front and back, but the edges are not wrapped and have no protection. After 1 careful reading, some fraying is evident and I question the longevity of the book. There is an uploaded photo on the product page that shows some details of this construction.

If you're a major Ramones fan that wants to get an inside perspective from one of the members themselves, Johnny's book is the one to go. Forget Dee Dee, Marky, the ex-wives and family members; Johnny was one of the two core members of the band who knew how to be an inside manager/organizer, and was there from the beginning of their formation in 1974 to the end of their last show in 1996. Sure his writing isn't on the same level as something you would expect from a professional writer, but he doesn't exaggerate, he just tells everything the way it is. Also, the pictures were just shocking. I never knew the kind of friends Johnny had connections with, as well as what he kept in his archive collection. I repeat, this is a must for Ramones fans. Read it, and you'll never want to put the book down.

Nowadays it's trendy to love the Ramones. Everybody does, right? Here you will find the truth from the horses's mouth. Incisive, sarcastic and brutally honest, I can't spoil you the juicy bits. Many

people accused Johnny of being negative, find the source of his neurosis and why the Ramones never "made it". The design is amazing.

A must for any Ramones fan, and (sadly) Johnny's posthumous insight into life with da Bruddas from his perspective. The other Ramones memoirs floating around paint Johnny as a right-wing control freak - but given that he was the only original band member (once Tommy left) not fighting the drug or mental health issues subsequently admitted by all, I tend to believe his assertion that what others saw as the behaviour of a controlling personality was simply his frustrated attempt to keep the band which was his life alive and functioning. Certainly the memoirs of long-time Ramones road manager Monte Melnick (also an essential Ramones read) attest to the craziness Johnny was dealing with on a day by day basis over decades. It's particularly amazing to read that Johnny managed to stick to his financial goal of being able to retire in financial security (how rare is that amongst musicians?) As to his much described right wing tendencies, Johnny asserts that a lot of his comments were not so much political as satirical, and said deliberately to joke/stir a reaction from his increasingly apathetic colleagues. Given the punk purity and lack of humour I have first-hand experienced amongst too many musicians I've interviewed, I can believe him when he says that basically his colleagues didn't get the joke. And it is also interesting to contrast his quiet life and lifelong closeness to his working-class, conservative family to the very different and often traumatic lives of his bruddas Dee Dee and Joey. And hey, anyone who allows a picture of himself being smooched by one his beloved cats (and writes with such open love and pain about his closeness to and death of his father) can't be that insensitive and macho? An impressive story. J.J. Adams

I love the Ramones and I love Rock and Roll but there is another reason to read this book. It is startling in its honesty. I do not know of any autobiography I have ever read that was so "warts and all" honest about the author. Johnny sounds like a bit of a jerk, but thank whomever he was in the right place at the right time to help create and sustain the magic that was the Ramones. A great book!!!

I must say, this book is the most interesting read about a rock star I've ever had the privilege of reading. Most of your traditional stories of the rise and fall of rock and roll stars have all bored me to death because they all lack honesty. Johnny Ramone does not hold back anything in this book. He gives you a personal insight into his mind and you begin to truly respect him for the fact that he is so

honest and straight forward with everything in his book. His stories aren't all about sex, drugs, and rock and roll. There is more to it. He was the glue that held the Ramones together, and it wasn't easy for him. Not only does he tell you his life story, but also he reviews every Ramones album and grades them according to his standards. After i picked up this book, I couldn't put it down. If your a hardcore Ramones fan you will dig this, I sure did.

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